

REMARKS**Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-16, and 18-25 are currently present in the Application, and claims 1, 9, 15, and 21-25 are independent claims. Claims 1, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 21-25 have been amended, claims 4-5, 11, and 17 have been canceled, and no claims have been added.

Applicants are not conceding that the subject matter encompassed by claims 1-25, prior to this and previous amendments are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner. Claims 1, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 21-25 were amended and claims 4-5, 11, and 17 were canceled in this Amendment solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this Application. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue claims, including the subject matter encompassed by claims 1-25 as presented prior to this and previous amendments, and additional claims in one or more continuing applications.

Drawings

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's acceptance of Applicants' formal drawings filed concurrently with the application.

Claim Objections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as their invention. Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 9, 15, and 21-25 in this response and request removal of the 112 rejection to claims 1-25.

Claim Rejections - Alleged Anticipation Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gross et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,283,856, hereinafter "Gross"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. Claims 4-5, 11, and 17 have been canceled in this response and, therefore, rejections to these claims are moot.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to further describe Applicants' distributed presentation and rules. Support for such amendments may be found in Applicants' specification on page 9, lines 1-21; page 10, line 21 through page 11, line 8; and page 17, line 29 through page 18, line 3. Therefore, no new matter is added with such amendments. As amended, claim 1 is a method claim with limitations comprising:

- receiving presentation content from an initiating client;
- identifying a plurality of users for which to utilize the presentation content;
- distributing the presentation content to the identified plurality of users;
- after distributing the presentation content, receiving a first message from one of the plurality of users that includes a rule, the first message associated with the distributed presentation content but sent separately from the distributed presentation content, wherein the rule includes a rule sentence that is selected from the group consisting of a job description and an expertise;
- identifying a subset of the plurality of users that correspond to the rule;
- forwarding the first message and the rule to the identified subset of users;
- receiving a second message and a modification of the forwarded rule from one of the identified users, wherein the modified forwarded rule includes a different rule sentence that is selected from the group consisting of a different job description and a different expertise;
- identifying one or more subsequent users that correspond to the modified forwarded rule; and
- sending the second message and the modified forwarded rule to the one or more subsequent users that correspond to the modified forwarded rule.

Applicants invoke a collaborative discussion by receiving presentation content from an initiating client and distributing the presentation content to a plurality of users. Next, Applicants receive a message that includes a rule. The message is associated with the distributed presentation but sent separately from the distributed presentation. For example, a user may have a question pertaining to one of the slides included in the

presentation. The Office Action points to various locations in Gross to reject Applicants' original "message" limitation but, after further review, Gross merely teaches email message management based upon rules. In addition, the Examiner states that "Gross discloses an email messaging system that can include attachments" (Office Action mailed April 14, 2008, page 6, item 9). As one skilled in the art can appreciate, attachments are sent **with** a corresponding email message. As a result, Gross never teaches "*receiving a first message from one of the plurality of users that includes a rule, the first message associated with the distributed presentation but sent separately from the distributed presentation content*" as claimed by Applicants.

Furthermore, Applicants permit a recipient client to modify a rule received from another user and, in turn, use the modified rule to send subsequent messages to other users. For example, an original rule may specify a particular job description in which to send a question, such as a "software engineer," and a recipient user may change the job description to "computer programmer." The Office Action points to various locations to Gross to reject Applicants' "rule modification" limitation but, after further review, Gross discloses approaches for creating rules but, however, none of which are based upon **modifying a rule received from another user**. Gross states:

"Within the system, rules are created in two ways according to the WHEN->IF->THEN construct. A form version of rules...provides the rule designer or user with a form having specific fields for the designer to fill in by selection, to create the rule(s)...An alternative rule design format... uses a text mode within the rule editor, in which the rule designer must have familiarity with rule syntax." (col. 9, lines 51-61, emphasis added)

As can be seen, the above excerpt never teaches or suggests modification of a forwarded rule. Rather, Gross teaches rule generation at a client for use at a client to screen incoming email messages. In addition, the Examiner states that "Gross discloses a messaging system (i.e., an email), where one user sends a message and another can reply (hence edit/change) to the message" (Office Action mailed April 14, 2008, page 6, item 10). Applicants agree with the Examiner in that Gross' users may send and reply to email messages. However, Applicants claim that the rule has been modified, and not the message as taught by Gross. Therefore, Gross never teaches or

suggests “receiving a second message and a **modification of the forwarded rule** from one of the identified users, wherein the modified forwarded rule **includes a different rule sentence that is selected from the group consisting of a different job description and a different expertise**” as claimed by Applicants.

Therefore, since Gross does not teach or suggest, either in whole or in part, all the limitations included in Applicants’ claim 1 as amended, amended claim 1 is allowable over Gross. Claims 9 and 23 are information handling system claims including similar limitations as claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 15 and 24-25 are computer program product claims including similar limitations as claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 21-22 are method claims including similar limitations as claim 1 and, therefore, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

Each of claims 2-3, 6-8, 10, 12-14, 16, and 18-20 depend, either directly or indirectly, upon one of the allowable independent claims 1, 9, or 15. Therefore, each of claims 2-3, 6-8, 10, 12-14, 16, and 18-20 are allowable for at least the same reasons that their respective independent claims are allowable.

Conclusion

As a result of the foregoing, it is asserted by Applicants that the remaining claims in the Application are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request an early allowance of such claims.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the Applicants' attorney listed below if the Examiner believes that such a discussion would be helpful in resolving any remaining questions or issues related to this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

By /Leslie A. Van Leeuwen, Reg. No. 42,196/

Leslie A. Van Leeuwen, Reg. No. 42,196

Van Leeuwen & Van Leeuwen

Attorney for Applicant

Telephone: (512) 301-6738

Facsimile: (512) 301-6742